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FLOOR DEBATE

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I have to expend a lot of energy. I can just speak at a well-modulated level and save the fire in my belly for farther down the line when the battle gets hotter. I will tell you all another thing that I am opposed to, and I don't want this or any other bill to be a step in that direction. I do not want the people in this country, and certainly not in this state, to be required at some point to have identification whenever they proceed to leave their homes and walk the streets. There are some cops now though who will stop people and, if they don't have some kind of identification, they will say that they are suspicious characters and they will actually detain them. The more things we do that will legitimize the notion of requiring people to tell the state who they are, what they are doing, the closer we approach to what was a hellish condition faced by black people in South Africa where they had to have identification papers, and Jews during Nazi Germany who had to wear that hideous yellow Star of David. They wore that, not because there was respect for it, but as a sign of their shame that they were supposed to feel and to mark them for future extermination. Some people think that when people such as myself, who have a tremendous concern about the state invading privacy, will make too great a leap and will be too willing to compare what is being done at the moment to some horrendous thing that happened someplace else. Governments, when they decide to be oppressive, do things incrementally. They do them in a way that conditions the public to an increasing invasion of their privacy. They condition the public to believe that the state has the right to know everything about them, to know where they're going, to know what they're doing. They begin to make arguments which the public itself...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...will make. If you don't have anything illegal in your pocket, why do you object to a cop going in your pocket? You just don't want your space violated; you just don't want them doing that. If you don't have drug paraphernalia or evidence of other crimes in your house, why do you object to a cop coming into your house just for a routine inspection, whenever he wants to? Why do you object to him stopping your car? Because that is not the role of the state, and people do